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FM AMEMBASSY MANILA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4887
INFO RUEHXS/ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS MANILA 001722

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED

STATE FOR EAP/MTS AND EAP/EP
DEPARTMENT FOR EEB/TPP/MTA/MTAA
STATE PASS USTR FOR BWEISEL, FYINUG, KEHLERS, AND BKLEIN

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [ETRD](#) [ECON](#) [RP](#)

SUBJECT: PHILIPPINES RESPONSE TO LETTER OF ASSISTANT USTR FOR
SOUTHEAST ASIA AND THE PACIFIC ON NEXT STEPS UNDER THE ASEAN-U.S.
TIFA

REF: STATE 81015

(SBU) Per reftel request, Econ sent the letter of Assistant USTR Barbara Weisel to Department of Trade & Industry Assistant Secretary Ramon Kabisigting on August 7. Kabisigting has not been available for comment since. On August 11, Department of Trade and Industry Undersecretary Thomas Aquino told econcouns in reference to the letter of Assistant USTR Weisel to her counterparts in the ASEAN senior economic officials (SEOM), his Department is committed to help in moving forward the US-ASEAN TIFA proposals with his ASEAN counterparts. Aquino suggests the formula of having an ASEAN country assigned to take the lead for each of the proposals that the United States put on the table during the recent ASEAN-AUSTR SEOM 3/40 Meeting held in Manila. He thinks that by using the proposed formula, this will ensure faster realization of the new US-ASEAN TIFA work plan proposals. Aquino said that they commit to host the ASEAN Trade Finance Dialogue, an activity that will benefit the Philippines and ASEAN.

KENNEY